



Women's Constitutional Rights Education Program Swaziland

The Program

In 2006, former U.S. Ambassador to Swaziland Lewis W. Lucke negotiated a \$200,000 civil society grant for Swaziland with USAID's Africa Bureau in Washington. In 2006, USAID Southern Africa began negotiations with civil society organizations and the U.S. Embassy in Swaziland. In March 2007, USAID initiated a competition for the grant and in July of 2007, Skillshare International Swaziland was selected as the recipient. USAID in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy in Swaziland conducted a signing ceremony with Skillshare on July 20, 2007. The grant is for \$182,000 (\$18,000 was used to conduct a pre-award survey of Skillshare International Swaziland).

For this grant Skillshare International has joined with Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), a regional women's legal association, and the IMBITA Women's Finance Trust to implement a women's constitutional rights education project. Activities will include:



- Training men and women as Peer Educators about women's rights as expressed in Swaziland's Constitution and the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- Training constituencies on women's rights
- Stimulating community debate regarding women's rights
- Training women how to advocate for their rights in formal and informal settings
- Facilitating debate on women's rights through television and radio programs
- Providing voter education

WLSA's role is to provide legal expertise on the Constitution. WLSA developed the training manual and facilitated training courses on constitutional rights.

IMBITA's role is to link the project to their clients who are members of the Women's Finance Trust. IMBITA's clients are organized through Local Membership Committees that meet regularly in all of Swaziland's constituencies. Skillshare's National Development Worker stationed at IMBITA coordinates women's constitutional rights trainings at the Local Membership Committees.

Some of the most prevalent topics discussed during the trainings are:

- Citizenship- Women cannot pass citizenship to their children
- Land Rights- Women cannot acquire land without the assistance of a male relative

- Legal status-Women cannot enter into contracts without the consent of their husbands
- Inheritance Law
- Divorce Law
- Civil and Cultural Marriages

The Team

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- Bonginkhosi Sengwayo, Project Officer, Skillshare
- Linda Kanya- National Development Worker, Skillshare
- Ntsiki Mchunu, National Development Worker, Skillshare
- Zanele Maphalala, National Development Worker stationed at IMBITA Women's Finance Trust
- Sibongile Mthembu, Director, IMBITA Women's Finance Trust